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The President's Daily Brief

~~*Top Secret*~~ *22 January 1968*

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DAILY BRIEF
22 JANUARY 1968

1. Brazil

Costa e Silva flatly told Ambassador Tuthill on Friday that Brazil will buy F-5s, not Mirages. The Brazilian President seemed to feel sure his plans would not be affected by recent US legislation.

2. Venezuela

The government suspects a coup may be attempted within the next few days. The plotters--a group of right-wing military officers and civilians--are being carefully watched by security officers, however, and their chances for success are slim.

3. Ecuador

3.3(h)(2)

Carlos J. Arosemena, [redacted] anti-American cousin of Ecuador's President, has declared his support for the presidential candidacy of Jose Valesco. Elections are in June. 3.3(h)(2)

The two men have been bitter enemies--in fact, Carlos ousted Velasco from the presidency in 1961 before himself being thrown out by the military.

[redacted] 3.3(h)(2)

4. Israel

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5. West Berlin

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6. Australia

Gorton is smack in the middle of one of Australia's worst labor disputes in 20 years. All mail truck drivers have gone on strike. The government is willing to discuss wage demands, but wants the mail moving first. The union refuses to drive until it gets what it wants. So far, the press is giving Gorton good marks for his firm stand. His prestige could be damaged, however, if the strike is not settled shortly.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

Special Daily Report on North Vietnam

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Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only

22 January 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Hanoi on State of the Union Address: The authoritative "Commentator" had an editorial in Sunday's party daily Nhan Dan which, in effect, rejected the San Antonio formula as a means of working toward settlement of the war. According to a summary of the article broadcast in English by Hanoi radio's international service, "Commentator" went on at length about President Johnson's references to Vietnam in the State of the Union message. He began by declaring that the Vietnam problem is clearly weighing more and more heavily on US life and that, for this reason, President Johnson was obliged to talk about ways to bring about an end to the fighting. The President, however, "only beat around the bush, repeating his San Antonio formula," the editorial declared.

The San Antonio formula, the editorial said, "is but a habitual US trick to put on the same footing the aggressor and the victim of aggression and to force the Vietnamese people to give up struggling in the face of continued US aggression." The "warlike objectives" of the "US imperialists" are laid bare not only by the "very insolent conditions" laid down in the San Antonio formula, but also by the continued US military buildup in South Vietnam and by stepped up US air raids over North Vietnam.

"Commentator" then referred to the President's "empty promises" to the American people in other parts of the State of the Union message. These, "Commentator" charged, will do no good and the "restlessness" of the American people will grow. All the political, racial, economic, and international problems faced by the people of the US are caused mainly by the Vietnam war, he declared, and President Johnson's "awkward words are but sheer falsification of truth and an affront to the people at home."

In conclusion, "Commentator" charged that "recent words and acts of the US imperialists" point merely to continuation of their "war of aggression"

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as they make "more and more insolent conditions" for a settlement. The Vietnamese "people," the editorial concludes, remain resolved to fight on.

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Viet Cong Broadcast on State of the Union Message: The Liberation radio's first mention of the message came in a broadcast in Vietnamese to South Vietnam on Friday. Fully half the broadcast was devoted to an attempt to refute the President's "boasts" about the progress of the war. The broadcast then asserted in general terms that the President's references to peace served simply as a facade for further expansion of the war. There was no mention of possible US - North Vietnamese talks and the broadcast completely ignored the San Antonio formula.

The program concluded with assertions that "it is obvious" that the Vietnam war has "upset the US economy, has shaken the position of the US dollar, and has caused 'a certain restlessness' in the US, the words Johnson used to describe the spreading antiwar movement in the US."

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Hanoi Continues to Circulate Bo's Interview: On Saturday, Hanoi rebroadcast to its office in Rangoon the entire Mai Van Bo interview of 16 January with the French newsman. [redacted] 3.3(h)(2)

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A New Appraisal of North Vietnam's Manpower Situation: A fresh CIA appraisal leads to the same general conclusion--that reserves are adequate to meet current demands and that Hanoi could support a military mobilization effort higher than present levels. The drains on manpower during the past three years have admittedly been sufficient to bring about some tightening in overall manpower availabilities. Hanoi has acknowledged manpower problems and responded by an increasing use of women in the labor force.

[redacted] 3.3(h)(2)

A comparison of the manpower situation in both North and South Vietnam is revealing. South Vietnam effectively controls a much smaller population, yet it has been able to maintain full-time military forces nearly 1.5 times the size that North Vietnam maintains. If North Vietnam were to call into

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full-time military service the same share of its population as has South Vietnam, the North Vietnamese military force would be more than double its present size.

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Rumanian Ambassador's Comments: The Rumanian ambassador to Paris, who is now leaving his post, commented during his farewell call at the US Embassy that the United States is really winning in Vietnam. The ambassador went on to say that Hanoi's delegation in Paris no longer tries to hide its concern over the pressure Peking has been exerting on Hanoi because of North Vietnam's alleged moves toward peace.

The Rumanian's statement must be tempered by his inclination to be somewhat imaginative when he is expressing his views.

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Viet Cong Broadcast Quotes Governor Romney: On Saturday, the Liberation radio quoted excerpts from the Governor's comments about the State of the Union message as an example of the "stream of strong criticism among many circles in the US and the West" regarding Vietnam policy. The same broadcast carried critical fragments from leading British and French newspapers.

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